

Message Text

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SUBJECT: 24TH SESSION COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT-
UN INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (UNRISD)

1. SUMMARY. THIS ITEM WAS DISCUSSED WITH LITTLE ENTHUSIASM. WITH EXCEPTION OF FRANCE THE FIVE DELS WHO INTERVENED SUPPORTED WORK OF THE INSTITUTE AND ENCOURAGED IT TO CONTINUE RESEARCH PROJECTS WHICH WOULD BE OF PRACTICAL VALUE TO DEVELOPING NATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. DIRECTOR OF UNRISD (MCGRANAHAN) INTRODUCED ITEM NOTING THAT UNRISD WAS COLLECTING SOCIAL DATA AND HAD FOR SOMETIME BEEN ATTEMPTING TO DEVELOP A SET OF SOCIAL INDICATORS. HE SAID UNRISD HAD TAKEN THE POSITION THAT THERE WAS NOT MUCH POINT IN DEVELOPING THE IDEAL SOCIAL INDICATORS SINCE EACH COUNTRY WILL NEED ITS OWN. COMMENTING ON THE SCARCITY OF SOCIAL DATA, MCGRANAHAN SAID THERE WAS THE NEED FOR COMPILING A DATA BANK. ON THE OTHER HAND UNRISD HAS FOUND THAT COLLECTING INFORMATION ON A LARGE SCALE SUCH AS CENSUS IS EXPENSIVE AND TAKES ABOUT FIVE YEARS TO PROCESS. BY THE TIME THE DATA HAVE BEEN ANALYZED IT MAY NOT BE USEFUL. THERE IS ALSO LACK OF PERSONNEL TO MANAGE DATA. OFTEN DATA ARE AVAILABLE BUT GOVERNMENTS ARE UNAWARE OF THIS AND THEREFORE THE INFORMATION IS NOT USED. HE SAID THE PROBLEM IS TO FIND INEXPENSIVE METHODS OF ASSESSING VARIOUS ISSUES WITHOUT ELABORATE STATISTICAL MACHINERY. IN DISCUSSING PROPOSED NEW PROJECTS MCGRANAHAN SAID THAT INFLATION AND INDICATORS ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN ARE MAJOR STUDIES. IN LATTER STUDY
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HE EXPLAINED THAT UNRISD WOULD SEEK TO IDENTIFY PRACTICAL

NEW INDICATORS TO MEASURE SIGNIFICANT CHANGE FOR WOMEN
INCLUDING THE DESIRABILITY AND UNDESIRABILITY OF THESE CHANGES.

3. US DEL OPENED DEBATE BY REGISTERING SUPPORT OF THE UNRISD
RESEARCH PROGRAM AND NOTING THAT THE STUDIES WERE RELEVANT AND
CONSTRUCTIVE. US ENCOURAGED WIDER DISTRIBUTION OF UNRISD
PUBLICATIONS IN OFFICIAL CIRCLES, ESPECIALLY DOCUMENTS CONCERNED
WITH SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT.

4. FRENCH DEL NOTED THAT THE WORK OF UNRISD IS SOUND BUT SAID
HE HAD EXPECTED MORE FROM THE INSTITUTE REPORT. HE SAID THE
DOCUMENT DID NOT MAKE AN ORIGINAL SCIENTIFIC CONTRIBUTION, AND
"THAT THE REPORT IS NOT A PEARL IN THE CROWN OF THE INSTITUTE."
HE CONCLUDED HIS INTERVENTION BY RECOMMENDING THAT UNRISD NOT
TRY TO ENCOMPASS AREAS TOO BROAD. HE CITED THE UNIFIED APPROACH
STUDY AS ONE TOO BROAD AND SHOULD HAVE BEEN APPROACHED BY SECTOR.
JAPAN IN A STATEMENT SUPPORTING THE INSTITUTE CONCURRED WITH THE
US THAT UNRISD PUBLICATIONS SHOULD HAVE WIDER CIRCULATION.
MEXICO DEALT ONLY WITH THE PROPOSED RESEARCH PROJECTS RECOMMEND-
ING THAT ADDITIONAL FACTORS BE CONSIDERED IN THE STUDIES ON HUNGER
AND WOMEN. THAILAND CONCLUDED DEBATE WITH PLEA THAT UNRISD MAKE
A LONG-TERM MASTER PLAN FOR RESEARCH AND ASSOCIATE ITSELF MORE WITH
REGIONAL AND NATIONAL INSTITUTES.
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